

Iraqi police." Today 2 of those 6 months have passed, and all of us hope that we are on track to meet his goal.

Before the election in Iraq in January, the administration repeatedly stated that 14 of the 18 provinces in Iraq are safe. We heard a similar view in a briefing from Ambassador Negroponte earlier this year.

If some areas can soon be turned over to the Iraqis, as Secretary Wolfowitz indicated, it should be done. It would be a powerful signal to the Iraqi people that the United States is not planning a permanent occupation of their country. If entire areas are being turned over to the Iraqis, we should be able to bring more American troops home.

We know the road ahead will be difficult, because the violence is far from ended.

The President's commitment to keeping American troops in Iraq as long as it takes and not a day longer is not enough for our soldiers and their loved ones. They deserve a clearer indication of what lies ahead, and so do the American people.

President Bush should be able to tell us how much progress—how much real progress—we are making in training the Iraqi security forces. Our amendment asks for specific information on that progress, if it's happening.

President Bush should be able to tell us how many American soldiers he expects will still be in Iraq 6 months from now, 12 months from now, 18 months from now.

General Abizaid and other military officials have begun to provide clarification of that very important issue, and I hope the President will as well.

Our amendment contributes significantly to that goal, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan is recognized.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I rise to support the amendment Senator KENNEDY has addressed, which was introduced by Senator DURBIN. It represents an effort to obtain information that is critically important to the American people in reaching a judgment, critically important to the Congress in reaching a judgment, critically important, I believe, to our military leaders, first and foremost, in reaching a judgment as to how quickly we can remove forces from Iraq.

It is in everybody's interest that we succeed in Iraq. Some of us who were highly critical of the way we went into Iraq—more unilaterally than we should have, without the support of any Muslim nations, making our presence a Western occupation of a Muslim nation, with all of the problems that unleashes, and many of us who have been critical of the way in which the Iraqi army was disbanded unilaterally, without much thought, and the way in which we did not have a plan for a violent aftermath when we went in, the way in which we didn't listen to our military leaders in terms of the need to prepare for the possibility of the vio-

lent aftermath. All of us, those of us who were critics and those of us who were supporters, now have a common interest in Iraq and have had, once the decision was made to go into Iraq, and that is that we succeed in Iraq.

Success in Iraq requires that the Iraqis take over their own defense and their own security. This amendment will help give us a roadmap toward understanding how long it will take, what is necessary, what the cost will be for the Iraqis to take over their own security, the key to our exit, first reductions in our American forces, and then to our ultimate departure from Iraq, and the key to it is how quickly we can turn over to Iraq their own security.

This amendment sets forth a number of reporting requirements, which will help us to make a judgment as to how quickly that can be done, which will help the American people to understand there is a strategy here, there are markers along the road we are on which will tell us whether we are achieving that essential security and, more importantly, whether the Iraqis are achieving that essential security for themselves.

Two things are going to be necessary here for success to be achieved. One is to secure the area and the other is a political accommodation between the people in Iraq—people who have different religious beliefs, different ethnic backgrounds, people who are now going to have to put themselves together to form a nation.

In terms of the training of Iraqi troops, we have very different estimates over the months, and it is very difficult for us in Congress and for the American people to make a judgment as to how quickly we are going to be able to reduce our presence in Iraq—a presence which has fueled the insurgency against us, which is used as a propaganda tool against us, because we are characterized as Western occupiers in a Muslim nation. The longer we stay there, the more troops we have there, the more we play into the hands of those who want to destroy us and destroy the hopes of Iraqis for a nation.

I want to give a few examples of the discrepancies in the characterization of the ability of the Iraqis to protect and defend themselves. Back in September of last year, President Bush said the following:

Nearly 100,000 fully trained—

I emphasize fully trained.

—and equipped Iraqi soldiers, police officers, and other security personnel are working today.

But then George Casey, our commander of the multinational force in Iraq, in January said the following:

When Prime Minister Allawi took office in June of 2004, he had one deployable battalion. Today, he has 40. When you multiply 40 battalions that are deployable with the number of people in each battalion, it comes out to approximately 30,000 personnel.

So when General Casey spoke in January, months after President Bush told us there were 100,000 fully trained and

equipped Iraqi soldiers, there were still but 30,000 personnel in Iraq who were deployable.

This is what General Myers said in February: That there are about 40,000 Iraqis in the police and military battalions, 40,000 that can "go anywhere in the country and take on almost any threat."

That is a very different impression than is given by the weekly status reports we get from the administration. This is the State Department's most recent weekly status report as to what they call trained-and-equipped Iraqi forces—152,000 this week.

There are not 152,000 Iraqi forces capable of taking on insurgents. If we are lucky, the number is about one-third of that. But we have to know two numbers, not just one, not just the weekly State Department number as to how many people are trained and equipped, but how many of those people are sufficiently trained and equipped so they can take on the insurgency. That is the critical number—how many are capable militarily of taking on insurgents.

I will give one other example of the discrepancy of the characterization of the capability of Iraqi forces.

When this supplemental in front of us was provided to us in February, this is what the supplemental represented to us: That 89 of the 90 battalions of Iraqi security forces that have been fielded—89 of 90—are "lightly equipped and armed and have very limited mobility and sustainment capabilities." That is about 95 percent plus of the Iraqi security forces today, according to the supplemental request; 95 percent are lightly equipped and armed and have limited mobility and sustainment. How different that is from the most recent weekly report we just received of 152,000 troops.

It is essential, it is critically important, no matter what one's views of the war are—the wisdom of going in, how well run it has been since we went in—no matter how pessimistic or optimistic one is, no matter how critical or positive one is, in terms of the operations and the way they were planned or not planned and the decision to go in as we did, we must have numbers, we must have estimates, which this amendment would require in regular reports, as to what the capabilities are of the Iraqi forces.

We need two numbers. We need that total number, 152,000, but we need the number of Iraqi forces that are capable of taking on the insurgents: How many are deployable? how many have real mobility and sustainment capabilities? How many are well trained and equipped so they can take on the insurgents?

That number is critical to Iraq. It is critical to Americans. Americans have the right to know the information this amendment requires be provided in regular reports.

I have one other comment before I yield the floor. In addition to the security requirements that must be met so